

*To Discontinue Development?*

# Honeywell Silent on Future of Multics

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Does Honeywell, Inc. plan to discontinue development of its Multics operating system?

At the moment, almost no one can say for sure. For the record, Honeywell last week declined to comment on recent, widespread rumors that its ongoing Multics development project is destined to get the ax, possibly as early as late next year.

"It is Honeywell's policy not to comment on future development programs or on development project funding levels," a company spokesman said.

But the firm's refusal to either confirm or deny the rumor follows hard on the heels of an internal Honeywell announcement that suggests Multics' days as a growing product may be numbered. The gist of the announcement — which is believed to have taken place simultaneously at Honeywell's Multics development centers in

Phoenix and Cambridge, Mass. — was that efforts to continue expanding and enhancing the operating system would soon cease.

However, the announcement was never made public and was later retracted when Stephen Jerritts, Honeywell Information Systems, Inc. president, failed to comment on the rumor at the firms' latest large-systems users group meeting in Los Angeles.

During the meeting's keynote address on Oct. 5, Jerritts reportedly told the users group that Multics' latest version, Release 9, had just gone out the door and that work on Release 10 had already begun. Then, after what one member of the audience described as a "noticeable pause," Jerritts turned his attention to other matters and reportedly never alluded to Multics' future beyond Release 10.

Thus, the operating system's status as an ongoing product seems virtually assured, at least until late 1982, when Release 10 is

most likely to make its debut. But beyond that date, the question of Multics' survival remains open to speculation.

On one hand, Jerritts' upbeat references to Releases 9 and 10 left the unmistakable impression that Honeywell still stands behind its operating system 100%. On the other hand, his failure — intentional or otherwise — to categorically deny the Phoenix and Cambridge announcements might lead an anxious user to suspect that rumors of Multics' future demise have at least some basis in fact.

Even if Honeywell does finally decide to kill its operating system after Release 10, support for Multics versions already in the field is unlikely to be affected. "We are continuing active marketing and support of our Multics product line," a company spokesman said last week in an official statement. "It is Honeywell's policy to provide for the continuing support needs of our existing customers on Multics and on all our products." The main impact of any decision to further halt Multics' development work would likely be to deprive many of the operating system's users of a path for future upgrades.

Highly rated as a program development system, Multics boasts approximately 30 very large users, many of them in countries other than the U.S. The product's customers run the gamut from universities to large businesses to military agencies.

## Western Electric JCL Generator Supports Recovery of IMS Files

NEW YORK — Western Electric Co. has announced the Data Base Backup and Recovery-Job Control Language Generator

(DBBR-JCLG), which it said supports data base integrity operations for users of IBM's IMS data base management system (DBMS).

DBBR-JCLG reportedly automates the